

REMARKS

The above amendments were made to lower the number of claims before the US filing fee is paid. The amendments were not made for any reason related to patentability. Accordingly, if allowed, the amended claims will be entitled to a full scope of equivalents.

Applicant respectfully requests entry of the amendments and remarks submitted herein. Claims 8-23 and 88 have been amended. Claims 3-7, 24-87 and 89-239 have been canceled. Claims 240-241 are new.

In addition, Applicant has amended the specification to include a paragraph describing related applications and to claim the benefit of priority to such applications.

CONCLUSION

Applicants ask that claims 1-2, 8-23, 88 and 240-241 be examined. The enclosed filing fee takes into account the claims pending following entry of this Preliminary Amendment. Please apply any other charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 50-3503.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at 952-876-4092 if the Examiner has any questions. Please direct all correspondence relating to this application to the address associated with Customer Number 53137.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn E. Uhrich et al.

By their Representatives,

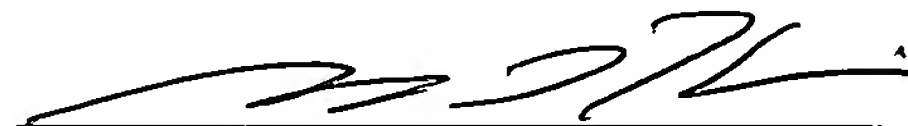
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